

A digital illustration of a young boy with brown hair, seen from behind, sitting on a grassy bank. He is holding a small, open book in his hands. He is looking across a body of water towards a city skyline at night. The city lights are reflected on the water's surface. The sky is dark blue with scattered white clouds and a few stars. A large, bright, circular light source, possibly the moon or a low sun, is visible in the upper left portion of the sky.

Unspoken Goodbye

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UNSPOKEN GOODBYE

DUIVERSE

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to her :)

PREFACE

LOVE, BOTH ITS PRESENCE AND ITS ABSENCE, defines us in ways we rarely understand until it's too late. It arrives like a whisper, soft and gentle, only to leave in silence, often unnoticed until the silence is all we are left with. In the quiet spaces between what was and what could have been, we search for answers that rarely come. We search for closure that remains elusive.

This story is about loss, the kind that shakes you to your core and leaves you wandering in the shadow of a love that once seemed so certain. It's about the spaces between words left unsaid, the quiet grief of memories fading with time, and the painful realization that we cannot hold onto things that were never truly ours to begin with.

The narrator's journey is one of reflection, of confronting the past in the hope of understanding it, and ultimately, of finding a way to move forward. It is a search for meaning in the aftermath of love lost, a search that unfolds in moments of quiet introspection, small acts of letting go, and the delicate rebuilding of a life left in fragments.

It is a story for anyone who has loved deeply, lost without warning, and wondered how to keep going when everything around them feels broken. It is for those who have learned that healing is not an absence of pain, but the acceptance of it. That love, like time, doesn't always heal; it simply teaches us to live with the scars.

This is a journey of finding strength not in moving on, but in realizing that even brokenness can give birth to something new. Even in the shadow of loss, life continues.

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I

THE NOTEBOOK



THE ROOM WAS STILL, except for the faint rustling of leaves outside the window. The wind moved gently through the trees, carrying with it a quiet that felt almost suffocating. It wasn't peaceful, no, it was the kind of silence that presses against you, making the air feel heavier. The man sat at his desk, his gaze lost in the pile of torn pages in front of him. His fingers hovered over the notebook, but he didn't write. Not yet.

The pages, worn and frayed at the edges, seemed to whisper back to him. Each one was filled with scribbled lines, verses, and thoughts that seemed to carry the weight of everything he couldn't say out loud. He had written all of this. Every word, every line, was a part of him, even if he couldn't understand why he kept them.

It had been years since the words first filled these pages. Time had passed, seasons had changed, and yet... the feelings hadn't. He ran a finger along the torn corner of one page, his mind wandering. The poem was unfinished, like so many others. The words had come to him once, eager to be written. Now, they felt like a reminder of something he would never get back.

Outside, the trees swayed lazily in the breeze. The wind blew through the branches, the leaves trembling with each gust. It was as though the

earth itself was trying to breathe, trying to push the moment forward, but he couldn't move. Not yet. Not yet.

He picked up his pen, feeling its weight in his hand. It had been so long since he'd written, so long since he'd allowed himself to touch these words. But now, in this moment of silence, it seemed like the only thing that could make sense of everything.

Time passes, doesn't it? Maybe we'll meet again...

The line came easily, almost without thought. Simple words, but they carried so much. The weight of years. The absence of her voice. The ache in his chest that never quite went away. The wind outside seemed to sigh in response, as if agreeing with the words.

He paused, staring at the page. The room was quiet now. The breeze had slowed, and the only sound was the faint rustle of paper. For a moment, there was nothing else, no past, no future, just the weight of what he had written. His mind wandered. He traced the edge of the paper, thinking of the things he had never said.

The notebook was always here, in front of him, as though it were waiting for him to remember. Each page was a snapshot of a moment in time, of love lost, of promises made, of dreams that had never come true. A history of who he was and who he could have been, if only things had turned out differently.

There was a soft knock at the door, but he didn't move. It was probably the wind. Or maybe it was nothing at all. He didn't care enough to check.

His eyes returned to the notebook. The pages felt heavier now, each one holding a piece of a past he couldn't forget. The more he read, the more distant she seemed. The more he wrote, the further away those memories felt.

He took a deep breath, closed his eyes for a moment, and then opened them again. He picked up his pen. Maybe, just maybe, writing would help. He hadn't believed it before, but now... the words seemed like the only way to hold on to what was slipping away.

Your memory brings a pain to my heart...

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Another line. Another fragment. The truth. A piece of himself he couldn't ignore. His heart hurt with each word. But there was something comforting in it too, the release of putting it down, the hope that by writing it, he could somehow let go.

He didn't believe that, though. Not really. But part of him clung to the idea that these words could somehow fix what was broken. That if he wrote enough, it would make a difference. That somehow, the pages would fill the emptiness.

Outside, the trees continued to sway in the breeze. The wind whispered through the branches, like a quiet secret. The world outside kept turning, but here, in this room, everything was still.

For a long time, he sat there, staring at the notebook. The pages were torn, some of the ink blurred from his restless hands, but it was still here. A silent witness to everything he had lost. Everything he could never get back.

II

FIRST GLIMPSE



THE FIRST TIME HE SAW HER, he didn't know what it was that made his heart skip. Maybe it was the way she laughed, bright, like the sound of wind chimes on a summer day, or the way her presence seemed to ripple through the crowd, effortless and magnetic. But something inside him shifted, almost imperceptibly, like the subtle change in the air just before a storm.

It was during the festival, a day full of noise and color, where everyone was lost in their own world. The music blared from speakers set up on every corner, the scent of fried food filled the air, and laughter bounced off the walls of the crowded streets. People were everywhere, but his eyes found her instantly.

She was standing near the food stall, talking to a group of friends. Her smile, wide and genuine, lit up the entire scene. He couldn't hear her words, but it didn't matter. The way she moved, how effortlessly she laughed, caught his attention in a way that made everything else fade into the background.

The moment felt surreal, like he was witnessing something beautiful and fleeting all at once.

He stood still, unnoticed, as she brushed a strand of hair behind her ear and glanced up at the sky. It seemed like a simple gesture, but it was

enough to stop him in his tracks. The world around him continued to spin, people walking by, children running through the streets, but all of it felt distant, muted, as if the universe had decided to give him this one moment.

For a long while, he watched her. She wasn't doing anything extraordinary, just existing. But in that moment, she was everything. The sounds around him, the colors, even the heat of the sun; it all blurred until there was only her.

He didn't speak to her then. He couldn't. He didn't even know why he was frozen in place. His mind raced with a thousand thoughts, all competing for his attention, but none of them felt real. None of them mattered.

In the midst of the noise, she was the only thing that felt real.

As the crowd began to move, he reluctantly took a step back, retreating into the flow of people. He could still feel the weight of her presence, lingering in the air like the aftertaste of something sweet.

That night, he couldn't stop thinking about her. Her laugh. The way her eyes sparkled when she talked. The way she seemed so... effortless. He replayed that moment over and over in his head, as if his mind could somehow rewrite the silence between them, could somehow bridge the distance he hadn't dared to cross.

He wanted to know who she was. But even more, he wanted to know if she had noticed him. If she had felt anything in that instant. But how could he know? It had been just a glance, a fleeting moment in the middle of a crowd. She probably hadn't even seen him.

But as he lay in bed that night, staring at the ceiling, the thought of her refused to leave him. It was like a seed planted deep in his mind, and he couldn't shake it. He wasn't sure what it meant or where it would go, but something inside him told him that it was the beginning of something, something he couldn't quite name, but something that would change everything.

And for the first time in a long while, he allowed himself to wonder if it was possible to feel something real, something lasting. But for now, all he had was the memory of her, and that would have to be enough.

III

SMALL TALKS



THE NEXT TIME THEY MET, it wasn't like the first encounter. No crowd. No festival. Just a quiet afternoon, the kind that had a way of making the ordinary feel significant.

It was in the hallway after class. He didn't expect it. He wasn't prepared for it. She was walking toward him, a few steps ahead, her backpack slung over one shoulder. He wasn't sure if she even saw him at first, but then she did. She looked up, caught his eye, and smiled. It was a simple smile, the kind that didn't try too hard. But it was enough to make his heart beat a little faster.

"Hey," she said, almost shyly. The sound of her voice, soft and casual, sent a ripple through his chest.

"Hi," he managed to reply, his voice betraying his nerves. He felt a flush creeping up his neck. Why was this so hard?

They fell into step together, walking side by side. Neither of them spoke at first. The silence was a little awkward, the kind that makes your thoughts feel too loud in your head. His mind raced. What do I say? What should I say? Should I say something?

It wasn't until they reached the corner of the hallway that he found the courage to ask something, anything, to keep the conversation going.

“So, uh... how was your class?” he asked, hoping it didn’t sound as stupid as he thought it did.

She gave a small laugh, almost like she was amused by the question. “It was fine, I guess. Pretty standard.” Her eyes twinkled as she spoke, and there was a warmth in her voice that made everything around them feel a little brighter. “How about you? How’s your class going?”

He caught his breath at the simple exchange. It was nothing extraordinary, just the usual small talk. But somehow, in that moment, it felt like they were part of something larger. The world, the noise, the bustling campus; it all faded as they moved together down the hallway.

They talked about trivial things: assignments they had to turn in, the weather, and plans for the weekend. But each word she spoke felt like a thread connecting them, no matter how small the conversation was. Every laugh, every glance, made his pulse quicken. He didn’t want to seem too eager, but every second of this moment felt like a tiny victory.

As they reached the exit of the building, he was about to say something else when she paused, looking over at him.

“I should get going,” she said, but the smile didn’t leave her face. “Maybe I’ll see you around?”

“Yeah,” he replied, almost too quickly. “Definitely.”

She turned and walked away, disappearing into the crowd of students heading in different directions. He stood there for a moment, watching her go, his heart still racing.

He could feel the weight of what had just happened, the significance of it, however small it might seem. They had spoken. They had exchanged words, a few sentences. He wasn’t sure if she had thought much of it, but he replayed every moment in his head, as if analyzing every detail, trying to understand the meaning behind each word.

As he walked back to his dorm room that evening, his mind wandered back to the simple exchange. The laugh. The smile. The way her voice had felt like music in the quiet hallway.

He couldn’t shake the thought that this, too, was a step forward, no matter how small. A first conversation, something he had hoped for

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but never quite expected to happen. It wasn't a grand confession, nor a life-altering moment. But to him, it felt like a beginning. The kind of beginning that could turn into something else, something more.

That night, as he lay in bed, he thought of her again. He could still hear her voice, still see the way her eyes lit up when she spoke. The memory of it was enough to keep him awake, his mind racing with possibilities. Maybe, just maybe, this was the start of something real.

And for the first time in a long time, he allowed himself to imagine it.

IV

BLOOMING DAYS



THE DAYS AFTER THEIR FIRST CONVERSATION FELT DIFFERENT. Not in any grand, obvious way, nothing had changed in the world around him. But within him, everything was shifting, quietly and undeniably. Every time he saw her between classes, walking on campus or sitting at the cafe with her friends, it felt like a subtle invitation. He wasn't sure if it was just him reading into things, but her smile when their eyes met seemed to linger a little longer than before.

They started to spend more time together, and though nothing was ever planned, it became a rhythm, something that felt natural. A passing glance after class would turn into a short walk to the next building, and that walk would turn into a cup of tea at the corner cafe. Conversations stretched on longer than they should have, about everything and nothing at all.

One afternoon, after a lecture, he found himself walking beside her, his steps falling in sync with hers without even trying. There was a lightness in the air, like something was being woven between them. She glanced over at him, her eyes crinkling as she smiled.

"Are you busy after this?" she asked casually, as if she hadn't just made his heart skip a beat.

“Uh... not really. Just got some reading to do.” His voice was shaky, and he cursed himself for it.

“Perfect,” she said, her voice warm. “I was thinking we could grab some tea. The little shop down the street has the best chai.”

He couldn’t say yes fast enough. “Yeah, that sounds great. I’m in.”

The walk to the cafe felt like it happened in a blur. Every word they exchanged seemed to grow more comfortable, like they were falling into a rhythm they hadn’t even noticed before. There were no long silences, no awkward pauses. Just the sound of their voices filling the space between them.

They found a table by the window, where the light from the afternoon sun streamed in, casting soft shadows on the wooden table. As they waited for their tea, she talked about her day, about the things that had gone wrong and right, about the small annoyances that never seemed to add up to anything serious. And he listened, really listened. There was something about the way she spoke that made the world around him feel more vivid.

When the tea arrived, it was exactly how she’d described it, warm and spicy, with a hint of sweetness. They sipped it slowly, their conversation meandering between different topics, from professors they both secretly hated to books they couldn’t stop reading. The more they talked, the more he realized how easy it was to be with her. It wasn’t forced, wasn’t something he had to try at. It just happened.

He couldn’t help but notice the way her laugh filled the small space around them, how it seemed to make everything else fade away. Every time she laughed, it was like the whole world shifted, a new layer of reality opening up.

They began to meet more often. After classes, they’d walk together, sometimes chatting about their day, other times walking in comfortable silence. On the weekends, they’d find small cafes to sit in, sharing pastries and stories. It was small, simple moments, nothing grand or over-the-top. But to him, it felt like everything.

One evening, after a particularly long day, they found themselves sitting on a bench by the campus lake, watching the sun dip below the horizon. The air was cool, the sky painted in shades of pink and orange. The world felt like it was holding its breath.

“This is nice,” she said, breaking the quiet. Her voice was soft, as if she was talking to herself more than to him.

“Yeah,” he agreed, his voice low. “It really is.”

They both stared out at the lake, the ripples in the water catching the last of the daylight. It was peaceful, almost too peaceful, like time itself had paused to let them have this moment.

“I’m glad we met,” she said, turning to look at him, her eyes catching the last of the fading sunlight.

His heart fluttered at her words. “Me too,” he whispered, feeling the weight of what was unsaid between them. The words sat there, heavy and real, unspoken but understood.

That night, as he sat alone in his room, he couldn’t stop thinking about her. About the way she smiled, the way she laughed, the way she made him feel like he could be someone better just by being around her. He realized something he hadn’t been able to admit before: he had written the first poem about her, the one that still sat in his notebook. But that was only the beginning. Now, he could feel it, the connection, growing stronger with every shared moment.

And as he lay in bed, he felt something new settling in his chest, a hope. The kind of hope that only came when you believed something good was waiting for you, something that could last.

V

A PROMISE



IT WAS A QUIET AFTERNOON WHEN IT HAPPENED. They had been walking together, as usual, their steps falling into rhythm without either of them thinking about it. The campus was unusually calm, the sounds of distant conversations blending with the rustling of leaves in the cool breeze.

She had told him about her day, something about an annoying group project and a professor who couldn't seem to make up his mind on grading, and he had laughed at her frustration. It was the kind of conversation that had become familiar, comforting in its simplicity.

As they reached the little park near the edge of campus, she stopped and turned to face him. The sudden pause caught him off guard, and he looked at her with a mix of curiosity and confusion.

"Are you okay?" he asked, a little too quickly.

She smiled, a soft, knowing smile that made his heart skip. "Yeah, I'm fine. I just... I don't know, I've been thinking about something."

He raised an eyebrow, his curiosity piqued. "What about?"

She hesitated, her gaze drifting to the ground for a moment before she looked back up at him. There was something different in her expression, a quiet intensity he hadn't seen before.

“You know... it’s funny,” she began, her voice a little quieter now. “When you meet someone, you don’t really expect them to stick around, not in the way you hope they will.”

His stomach tightened. “What do you mean?”

She took a slow breath, as if gathering her thoughts, before she spoke again. “I’ve met a lot of people in my life, people who come and go. And I’ve always been okay with it, because that’s just how things are, right? People come into your life, leave, and you just move on. But... with you, it’s different.”

Her words hung in the air between them, heavy and strange, like she had just revealed a secret neither of them was fully ready for. He opened his mouth to say something, but closed it again, unsure of what to say.

“I’m not saying anything dramatic,” she continued, her voice almost apologetic. “I’m not asking for some kind of vow or promise, but... I want you to know something.” She stepped a little closer to him, her eyes never leaving his. “I’ll always be around. You don’t need to worry about that. I’ll always be here.”

The words struck him in a way he hadn’t expected. It wasn’t a confession, not really. It wasn’t anything grand or romantic. But in that moment, it felt like a promise, a quiet one, spoken softly, but unspoken in its significance. A promise that no matter what, she would be there. That he wasn’t alone in this.

“I...” He paused, unsure of how to respond, but the words felt right on his tongue. “I believe you.”

The breeze picked up again, ruffling their hair, and for a moment, the world seemed to hold still. She smiled, her expression softening as if she had shared a piece of herself he hadn’t expected to see.

“Good,” she said, her voice barely above a whisper. “Because that’s all I can give you. Just that.”

It wasn’t much, and yet it felt like everything. Her words settled into his chest, a quiet warmth blooming where there had only been uncertainty before. He didn’t know exactly what it meant, but he knew this:

it mattered. It mattered more than he could say. More than he could put into words.

As they walked home later that day, the promise she made lingered in his thoughts, following him like a shadow. It was a promise that had no weight, no guarantee, but it was hers to give, and somehow, that was enough.

That night, as he sat at his desk, his mind replayed her words over and over. I'll always be around. A small sentence. A simple promise. But to him, it was everything. It was a tether, something to hold onto in the midst of the storm that was slowly beginning to brew inside him.

He opened his notebook and began to write, the pen moving across the paper with a fluidity that surprised him. He wrote for hours, the words coming easily, pouring out like a confession, like something he had been holding back for too long.

When he finished, he looked at the poem. It was about her, about this moment, about the promise she had made, and about the feelings that were growing inside him, stronger and more certain with each passing day.

For the first time, he didn't feel afraid of what he was writing. The words weren't just about loss or longing. They were about something new, something real.

And as he looked at the words on the page, he realized something he hadn't fully understood until now: she had planted the seed of something in him. A hope. A hope that wasn't based on promises of forever or guarantees of tomorrow. But a hope that, for today, for this moment, everything was as it should be.

VI

THE MISSED CALL



IT WAS THE SOUND OF HIS PHONE VIBRATING against his desk that first caught his attention. The day had been long, one of those stretches where time moves slowly and yet somehow everything piles up all at once. He had spent the last few hours buried in books, trying to focus, but his mind kept drifting back to her. To their conversations, to the small moments they shared.

The phone vibrated again, pulling him from his thoughts. He glanced at the screen. It was a call from her.

His heart skipped, a mixture of excitement and nerves swirling inside him. Without thinking, he answered it immediately, his voice rushing out in a hasty greeting.

“Hey! I was just thinking about you,” he said, trying to sound casual, though his pulse was still racing.

There was a slight pause on the other end. “Hey, sorry, I missed your call earlier,” she said. Her voice was soft, a little distant, but still warm. “I’ve been running around all day.”

He frowned, trying to hide the small knot of disappointment in his chest. “It’s okay. I just thought I’d catch you for a minute.”

They both fell into a comfortable silence for a moment, neither of them knowing quite what to say. He could hear the faint sound of background noise: laughter, maybe, or the murmur of voices from a crowd.

"Where are you?" he asked, trying to push away the creeping feeling of uncertainty that had settled in his stomach.

"Just out with some friends," she replied, her tone light. "We're grabbing something to eat. I didn't mean to leave you hanging earlier, but I thought I'd give you a call back now."

It wasn't like her to be this distracted, to sound so distant. He could tell she wasn't fully present in the conversation. It was subtle, but the shift was enough to make him uneasy.

"It's okay," he said, though the words felt hollow. He tried to brush it off, to keep the conversation light. "We can talk later if you're busy."

There was another pause before she spoke again. "I'll talk to you soon, okay? I have to go, but we'll catch up later."

"Yeah, of course," he responded, forcing a smile into his voice. "Take care."

He hung up, the phone still in his hand. The buzz of excitement he had felt earlier faded quickly, replaced by a slow churn of doubt in his chest.

She was busy. That was all. She had a life outside of him, a world that didn't revolve around their small moments together. He knew that, but the thought of it unsettled him more than he wanted to admit.

He set the phone down on the desk and leaned back in his chair, staring at the ceiling. The room felt too quiet now, the silence stretching on far longer than he had expected. His mind began to race. Was she with someone else? Why didn't she seem as excited to hear from me? Did I say something wrong?

The phone vibrated again, pulling him from his thoughts. This time, it wasn't a call but a message.

Sorry, I had to go. Hope we can chat tomorrow. Take care!

It wasn't much. Just a simple message, a few words of reassurance. But something about it felt... off. The casual tone, the brevity. It didn't feel like her. It didn't feel like the connection they had been building.

He stared at the screen, his finger hovering over the reply button. What should he say?

The questions and doubts lingered, swirling in his mind. Was this just her being busy, or was something else happening? Was he imagining things?

He set the phone aside and rubbed his eyes. The tension in his chest wouldn't go away. That small moment, her distracted tone, the brief message, felt like the first crack in the foundation he had built in his mind. It wasn't a huge thing, not really. But it was enough to make him question everything.

The silence in the room seemed louder now, and the weight of the uncertainty pressed down on him.

He picked up his notebook, flipping through the pages until he found one of the poems he had written about her. The words seemed to mock him now, their innocence and hopefulness a stark contrast to the nagging doubts that had started to settle in. He couldn't get the image of her out of his head, her smile, her laugh, the warmth in her voice. But now, all of it seemed far away, distant.

It was just a missed call. Just a busy day. He knew that. But still, the silence that followed had a way of growing louder, like the space between them was suddenly wider, more noticeable.

And for the first time, he wondered if the small cracks in their connection were already starting to show.

VII

WAITING NIGHTS



THE DAYS AFTER THE MISSED CALL felt like they stretched into eternity. His routine remained the same: classes, studying, walks, and tea, but something had changed. A quiet unease began to seep into every moment. It wasn't anything drastic, nothing he could point to and say, This is the problem. But it was there, gnawing at the edges of his mind, a quiet worry that he couldn't shake.

He found himself checking his phone more often than usual, each buzz and vibration causing his heart to race, even though he knew it wasn't her. Text messages from friends, notifications about assignments, random group chats, all things that had once been background noise to him now seemed like distractions from the one thing he actually wanted: her.

He had texted her a few times after the call, nothing too intense, just simple messages, like he was trying to fill the void with words. But each time, the reply was delayed. Shorter than usual. There was no warmth in the messages anymore, just politeness, as if they were drifting apart in small increments that he couldn't quite explain.

He spent his nights alone, staring at his phone. His room felt too quiet, the silence almost suffocating. The only sound was the soft tick-

ing of the clock on the wall, a rhythmic reminder that time was passing, but not in the way he wanted.

At night, the hours seemed to drag on. He would sit on his bed, the screen of his phone dimly lit in the dark room, scrolling through their old conversations, the ones filled with laughter and long discussions. He read each one, tracing the words, savoring the moments when they were easy and unguarded. But every time he looked at the latest messages, the words felt like they had been written by a different person. A stranger. A version of her that he didn't recognize.

It was late when he finally received her text, a simple message, as if nothing had changed:

Sorry, I was busy with some stuff. How've you been?

He stared at the screen for a long moment, unsure of how to respond. The emptiness of the message felt like a punch to the gut. It wasn't the first time she had been distant, but something about it, in that moment, hit harder than before. He could hear the absence in her words, the space between them growing wider with each text, each unanswered call.

He started to type a reply, something casual, something lighthearted to cover up the uncertainty brewing inside him. But before he could press send, he stopped. He thought about it for a moment longer and deleted everything he'd written.

Instead, he just wrote:

I'm good. Just been thinking about you.

He hesitated before sending it, as if waiting for the perfect moment when it would be received with the same warmth that it was sent. He wasn't sure why he said it. Maybe he was hoping it would pull her back, give her a reason to pause and look at him the way she had before.

He hit send. And waited.

The minutes passed slowly, and then, finally, her reply came:

That's sweet. I've been thinking about you too. Let's catch up soon.

But something about it didn't feel right. It was too easy, too brief. The words were kind, but they didn't carry the weight they once had.

He felt a small pang in his chest as he reread it. There was no excitement, no sense of urgency behind her words. Just a promise to catch up, one that seemed like it could be easily broken.

He put the phone down, the screen still lit in front of him, casting a soft glow on his face. The quiet of the room pressed in around him. He knew he was reading into things. Maybe she was busy. Maybe she was just tired. But the doubt, the uncertainty, it wouldn't leave him.

That night, sleep didn't come easily. His mind kept circling back to the same questions: Was it something I did? What's changing? Why does it feel like she's slipping away?

He tried to distract himself, reading, listening to music, but nothing worked. The pull of those questions was too strong. Every time he closed his eyes, he saw her smile, heard her laugh, felt the warmth of her presence. But the more he thought about it, the more he realized that the space between them wasn't just physical; it was emotional. And it was growing, slowly but steadily, until it felt like there was an ocean separating them.

In the stillness of the night, he wondered if this was how it always happened. First, the connection, the spark, the promises. Then, the distance, the waiting, the silence. Maybe this was the pattern. Maybe it was inevitable.

But he couldn't help hoping that it wasn't. That somehow, despite the distance, they could find their way back to what they once had.

VIII

RUMORS



IT STARTED WITH A WHISPER, barely a murmur, but soon it was a hum that he couldn't ignore. It came from his friends first, the ones who were always around, always talking about something. At first, he didn't think much of it. After all, they were just friends, and they liked to joke, to make things up for fun. But when the rumors kept surfacing, over and over again, he couldn't shake the gnawing feeling that there was more to it.

"She's been hanging out with someone else a lot lately," one of his friends said casually, as if it wasn't a big deal.

He paused, unsure if he had heard right. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, you know," his friend replied, shrugging as if the answer was obvious. "She's always with that guy from her chemistry class. They seem pretty close."

He couldn't speak for a moment, the words hanging in the air like smoke. He had seen her with friends before, plenty of times. They both had their own circles, after all. But the way his friend said it, the tone that laced his words, made something inside him tighten.

"She's probably just a little distracted," he muttered, more to himself than anyone else. "She's busy, with classes and everything."

But the doubts began to creep in, slowly at first, like a shadow stretching across the floor. The more he tried to push the thought away, the bigger it became. Why hadn't she mentioned this other person? Why hadn't she said anything about getting close to someone else?

The next day, he saw her walking across campus, laughing with a guy he didn't recognize. His stomach dropped at the sight. She looked so at ease with him, like there was no hesitation, no walls between them. The way she smiled, the way her eyes lit up, he had seen that look before.

It wasn't directed at him.

He stopped walking, frozen for a moment, as the realization settled over him like cold water. He told himself not to look, to turn away and keep walking. But he couldn't. His gaze was drawn to them, to the easy, effortless connection they shared. The laughter. The way they leaned into each other as they walked.

It didn't make sense. It couldn't make sense. He had been with her, shared those quiet, simple moments. He had felt her warmth, had heard her laugh, had seen the way she looked at him when their eyes met. But now, watching her with someone else, it felt like he had been imagining it all.

His heart hammered in his chest, the discomfort of jealousy mixing with something worse, doubt. The kind of doubt that eats away at everything. That makes you question the things you thought were certain.

For the rest of the day, he couldn't shake the image of them together, her smile and the way the guy seemed so at ease with her. He texted her that night, his fingers moving quickly over the keyboard, his mind racing.

Hey, I saw you today... with that guy. Is everything okay?

He hit send before he could second-guess himself, immediately regretting the vulnerability in the question. It was silly, wasn't it? He was probably just overthinking things. But the doubt that had settled in his chest wasn't something he could easily push aside.

She replied almost immediately:

Yeah, everything's fine. He's just a friend from class, nothing serious.

It was a simple answer, but there was something about it that didn't sit right with him. The words felt hollow, like a quick reassurance designed to placate him rather than address what was really bothering him.

He stared at the message for a long time, his fingers hovering over the screen. A friend from class, he knew she had friends, of course, but the way she said it, so casually, so dismissive; it didn't match the tightness in his chest. It felt like a wall had been put up between them, one he hadn't even noticed before.

He thought about calling her, asking for more, pressing her for clarity, but he didn't. He couldn't. Part of him was terrified of the answer, afraid that the distance he felt growing between them was real, that he had somehow missed it.

Instead, he put the phone down, his mind still racing. He wanted to believe her. He wanted to trust that everything was fine, that this was just a misunderstanding. But a part of him couldn't let it go. The more he tried to dismiss the feeling, the stronger it became. The rumors, the image of her with someone else, the growing silence between them; it was too much to ignore.

The night felt long and empty, the space between them growing with each passing minute. The doubt, once a whisper, was now a scream in his mind.

IX

THE FESTIVAL SCENE



THE FESTIVAL HAD ALWAYS BEEN A CELEBRATION: of life, of community, of simple joys. It was the kind of event where everyone came together: families, students, friends. The air was thick with the smell of fried food, the sound of laughter, and the vibrant colors of tents and stalls stretching along the streets. Music played from every corner, and the crowd moved with an energy that was infectious.

But today, the festival felt different. There was a heaviness in the air that he couldn't shake.

He hadn't planned on going. In fact, he'd thought about skipping it, staying in, and letting the day pass like any other. But something tugged at him, a quiet feeling he couldn't ignore. He found himself wandering into the crowd, his mind too clouded to even notice the distractions around him.

It didn't take long before he saw her.

She was laughing, her eyes sparkling with that familiar warmth, surrounded by a group of people. Her friends, no doubt. But it wasn't the group that caught his attention. It was the guy standing beside her. The same one he had seen with her the other day.

He stood a little too close, his hand brushing against hers as they laughed together. It wasn't anything overt, but it was enough to make his stomach twist.

He stood there for a moment, watching them, feeling the weight of the scene settle over him like a sudden chill. She looked happy, genuinely happy. He could see it in the way she leaned in, the way her smile lit up her face. But the more he watched, the more he realized that the happiness she had was not for him. It wasn't for him anymore.

He told himself to move. To walk away, to leave the festival, to get away from the scene that was only reminding him of everything he didn't have. But his feet felt rooted to the ground. He couldn't tear himself away from the sight of her, from the laughter, from the way they looked so comfortable together.

She hadn't even noticed him standing there.

The realization hit him harder than he expected. They were both part of the same world, yet it felt as though they were miles apart. The distance that had grown between them was more than just physical. It was emotional. It was as if, in that moment, everything that had once connected them, every conversation, every laugh, every shared moment, had dissolved into the crowd. She was no longer a part of his world, not in the way he had imagined.

The knot in his chest tightened, and for a moment, he felt like he couldn't breathe. The festival, which had once been a place of joy, now felt suffocating. The noise, the people, the lights, they all blurred together, as if they were just background noise to the crushing reality he was facing.

He turned and walked away.

The streets felt different as he made his way through the crowd. The laughter, the music, the chatter; it all felt distant, like he was hearing it from another world. His own thoughts were too loud, too overwhelming, drowning out everything else.

He didn't know where he was going, didn't know why he kept walking. The only thing he knew was that he couldn't stay there any longer.

Not with her out there, with him, laughing, enjoying a moment that didn't include him.

Later that night, he found himself sitting in his room, the door shut against the noise of the world outside. The festival had long since ended, but the memory of it lingered in his mind, sharp and bitter.

He took out his phone and, for a moment, considered texting her. He could ask how her night had gone. He could tell her he had seen her, just to hear her response, to somehow bridge the distance he felt growing between them. But as he hovered over the screen, the words seemed meaningless. What could he say? What could he ask that wouldn't come across as too needy, too desperate?

Instead, he put the phone down and let the silence settle over him. He replayed the moments from earlier, the laughter, the closeness she shared with him. It was like a wound, raw and open, that hadn't been there before. A quiet pain that wouldn't go away.

He had never imagined that a simple sighting, a single moment, could shatter the illusion he had built. But that's what it felt like. She was slipping further away, and no matter how much he wanted to reach out, to hold on, he couldn't. The distance was too great.

And so, he sat there in the dark, feeling the weight of everything he had lost and everything he feared was slipping through his fingers. The festival had promised connection, joy, and warmth, but all he felt now was emptiness.

X

THE UNKEPT MEETING



IT HAD BEEN A WEEK SINCE THE FESTIVAL, since he had seen her laughing with him, that guy, and he couldn't shake the image from his mind. It lingered in every moment, hanging in the air like a cloud he couldn't escape.

She had promised to meet him again. She had said, "Let's hang out soon," and he had clung to those words like a lifeline, a small thread of hope in the mess of his thoughts. He tried to convince himself that everything was fine, that this was just a bump in the road, but deep down, he felt something shifting, something slipping through his fingers.

They had agreed to meet at the café they both liked, the one by the park where they had shared so many quiet afternoons. He had arrived early, as he always did, his fingers restless as he tapped the edge of his coffee cup. The warmth of the drink did little to ease the chill in his chest. He had sent a text earlier to let her know he was there.

I'm here. Can't wait to see you.

The minutes ticked by, slowly at first, then more quickly as the clock on the wall seemed to mock him. He checked his phone again, but there was nothing. No text, no call. Nothing. He wondered if something had come up, if she had gotten caught up in something. But she had never been late before. Not like this.

Another thirty minutes passed. He checked his phone again. Still nothing.

His mind began to spiral, trying to piece together the silence. Was something wrong? Did I do something? The questions felt like a heavy weight, each one piling on top of the other. But it wasn't like her to flake out, to be this... distant. She had always been so reliable, so present. And yet, now, he was alone at the table, the empty chair across from him mocking him with its emptiness.

He stood up, pacing back and forth near the counter, glancing at the door every few seconds, expecting her to walk through. He couldn't sit still any longer. The minutes felt like hours, and the silence in the café seemed louder now, the hum of voices around him a distant noise that didn't matter. All he could think about was her and why she wasn't here.

Another ten minutes passed, and still, no sign of her.

He sent another text, his fingers trembling as he typed.

Hey, are you still coming?

No reply.

The knots in his stomach twisted tighter. He tried to convince himself that there was an explanation, that maybe she was just running late. But a part of him, the one that had been whispering doubts ever since he saw her with that guy, started to wonder if this was more than just a mistake. Maybe it wasn't a missed call. Maybe this was something else. Maybe she didn't want to see him anymore.

The thought hit him like a punch to the gut, and he immediately pushed it away. No, he told himself. She wouldn't do that. But as the minutes dragged on, the doubt grew, feeding into the growing feeling of unease.

He couldn't sit there any longer. He couldn't keep waiting for someone who might never show up. The pain of it, the waiting, the uncertainty, was too much. He grabbed his things, his movements sharp and abrupt, as if leaving the café would somehow ease the tension that had been building inside him.

He stepped outside, the cold air biting at his skin as he walked aimlessly down the street. The walk was more of a blur than anything, his mind too clouded to focus on the world around him. He kept looking at his phone, hoping for some kind of message, some explanation that would make sense of the situation. But there was nothing. Just silence.

His phone buzzed in his hand.

He almost didn't want to check it. But he did.

Sorry, I couldn't make it. Something came up. Let's reschedule?

The message was short, almost impersonal. Nothing about it felt warm or familiar. Just a cold, distant excuse. Something that didn't quite match up with the person he thought he knew.

He stared at the message for a long moment, his heart sinking with each word. Something came up. It was vague, but the distance between the words felt so much heavier. It was like she had made an effort to avoid the situation. To avoid him.

And then, for the first time, the full weight of everything hit him. The missed calls, the lack of responses, the rumors, everything began to form a picture that he couldn't ignore anymore. She wasn't the same person. The person he had known, the one who had smiled at him with warmth and comfort, was slipping away. And he had no idea how to stop it.

He stood there, staring at the screen, the buzzing of his phone the only sound in the world. He had hoped for an explanation, a reason to hold on to, but instead, he had a simple, empty message that told him everything he didn't want to know.

The silence, the waiting, the unkept promises, they were all just pieces of a bigger picture, one he couldn't escape from, no matter how hard he tried.

XI

THE TALK



HE COULDN'T WAIT ANY LONGER. The silence between them had stretched on for too long. The unanswered calls, the missed meetings, the subtle shifts in her behavior, everything had piled up until he could no longer pretend that it was all just a coincidence. He had to know. He had to hear it from her, even if it was something he didn't want to hear.

He sent the message.

Can we talk?

It was simple, direct, but it carried the weight of everything he had been feeling. His heart was racing, his palms sweating, as he waited for the response. The minutes ticked by, and then, finally, the phone buzzed.

Sure. Where do you want to meet?

He almost couldn't believe it. She was agreeing. She was willing to talk. But a knot formed in his stomach. He already knew that the conversation they were about to have would change everything. He couldn't escape that feeling.

They agreed to meet at the same café, the one that had once been their spot, the place where they had spent so many afternoons talking

about nothing and everything. The same place that had now become the setting for so much uncertainty.

He arrived first, sitting in the same spot he had sat just a week before. He could already feel the tension, the anticipation building in his chest. The air felt thick, charged, as if the universe itself was waiting for this moment.

When she walked through the door, his breath caught in his throat. She looked the same, maybe a little tired, but still familiar. The smile she gave him was small, almost guarded, and it made his heart ache. It wasn't the same smile that had once made him feel like everything was right. It felt... distant.

She sat down across from him, her hands folded neatly in front of her, a faint frown tugging at the corners of her mouth.

"Hey," she said, her voice soft, but there was something in it that he couldn't quite place. Something that made his stomach twist.

"Hey," he replied, his voice sounding unfamiliar to his own ears. He tried to keep his tone steady, but the words felt heavy.

There was a long pause between them. Neither of them spoke, the silence growing uncomfortable. He could feel his heart pounding in his chest, each beat louder than the last.

"Look, I," he started, but she cut him off.

"I know," she said quietly, her eyes downcast. "I know I've been distant. I've been... busy, with things. It's not you, it's just... life, you know?"

He clenched his fists under the table, trying to keep his frustration in check. Life. It always came back to that, didn't it? The excuse that everyone used when they didn't know how to explain the unexplainable.

"Then why does it feel like you're pulling away?" he asked, the question escaping before he could stop it. His voice was raw, filled with more emotion than he intended to show. "Why haven't you been... the same? Why have you been avoiding me?"

She looked up at him, her gaze conflicted, her lips pressed together in a tight line. "It's not like that," she said, but her voice lacked conviction.

"I just... I've been overwhelmed, and I didn't know how to talk about it. I'm sorry if I hurt you, but I didn't mean to."

He stared at her, his mind racing with everything he had been feeling, everything that had been building inside him. The way she had been acting, the way she had shut him out; it didn't add up.

"So, what does that mean?" he asked, the question barely a whisper. "Are we still... us? Or are you just... done?"

Her eyes flickered with something that might have been guilt, but she didn't answer right away. It felt like the world was holding its breath. She opened her mouth, closed it again, and then finally spoke.

"I don't know," she said, her voice barely audible. "I don't know what I want anymore. I'm sorry."

The words hit him like a punch to the gut. He wasn't sure what he had expected, but this wasn't it. He had hoped for something more concrete, something that would reassure him, tell him that everything was just a misunderstanding. But this... this was nothing. It was emptiness.

"I think... I think we need some space," she continued, her voice shaky now. "Maybe we need to figure out what we want, separately."

He stared at her, the weight of her words sinking in. Space. The word echoed in his mind, and he felt something inside him shatter. There it was, the thing he had been afraid of, the thing he had been avoiding. The truth that had been staring him in the face all along.

She wasn't the same. She wasn't his anymore.

"I understand," he said quietly, even though he didn't. He didn't understand any of this. How could he? How could he understand when everything that had felt so certain now felt like sand slipping through his fingers?

She looked at him with those same familiar eyes, but they were different now, distant, cold. "I really am sorry," she whispered, her voice barely more than a breath.

And just like that, it was over. The silence between them deepened, stretching farther than the distance they had once felt between them.

There was no more love in the air, no more promise of tomorrow, no more hope of a future together.

He stood up, his legs feeling weak, as if the weight of the conversation had drained the last bit of strength from him.

“I should go,” he said, his voice distant now, like he was speaking from another world. “Goodbye.”

She nodded, her eyes not meeting his. “Goodbye.”

And that was it. No grand gesture. No desperate plea for things to go back to the way they were. Just silence.

The door closed behind him as he walked out of the café, and the world outside felt colder, emptier. He had expected something, anything, but now that it was done, now that he knew the truth, he couldn’t bring himself to feel anything but the crushing weight of what was lost.

XII

COLLAPSE



HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW LONG HE SAT THERE, after leaving the café. Time had become something impossible to grasp, stretching and contracting like the walls of his own mind. The world around him felt muffled, as though he was submerged underwater, hearing everything but unable to connect with anything. He barely registered the sounds of the city as he walked aimlessly, his feet taking him nowhere in particular.

His head was a mess, a storm of confusion and pain. The words she had spoken, I don't know what I want anymore, Maybe we need some space, were still echoing in his ears. The finality of it all weighed him down, suffocating him with its coldness. He had expected a break, a pause, maybe even a fight. He had expected something more than just... nothing. But that was all it was now. Nothing.

His body felt heavy as he stumbled through the streets, as though he was carrying the weight of a thousand thoughts on his shoulders. He hadn't gone home. He couldn't go home, not yet. He didn't want to be alone with the emptiness that would be waiting for him in his room. His mind spun, replaying the conversation over and over, trying to make sense of it, trying to hold on to something, anything, that could justify what had just happened.

But there was nothing.

She had said it herself: I don't know what I want anymore.

And now, neither did he.

The hours bled into each other, and before he knew it, he was standing in front of the river. He didn't remember walking here, didn't remember making the decision to come. The water stretched before him, flowing endlessly, a metaphor for the things that couldn't be stopped. He leaned against the railing, the cool metal biting into his palms. The sound of the water was constant, soothing, but it didn't make him feel better. It only reminded him of how far he was from everything he had once known.

He hadn't realized how badly he was shaking until he pressed his hand against the cold steel. The pain in his chest had settled into his bones, a deep, aching emptiness that he couldn't escape from. He closed his eyes, trying to steady his breath, but every time he thought he had a grip on it, the thoughts rushed back in like a flood. The looks, the words, the silence. Everything had slipped through his fingers, and now he was left with nothing.

He couldn't remember the last time he had cried, not for this, not for her. But as the cold night air wrapped around him, something inside cracked. The tears came, silent and relentless, spilling down his face as he gripped the railing harder. The weight of it all, his heart, his mind, his soul, had become too much to bear.

Why? He wanted to scream it out, to shout to the heavens, to ask why it had to end this way. Why couldn't it just be simple, like it had been in the beginning? Why couldn't it be the way he had imagined it would be?

But there were no answers. Not here, not now. No one was listening.

He stayed there for what felt like hours, the tears fading as the night grew colder. The city was quiet now, the streets empty, save for the occasional passerby, who paid him no mind. He didn't want to be seen, didn't want anyone to notice the brokenness that was so clearly written on his face.

Unspoken Goodbye

Eventually, he left the river. He walked back to his apartment, his feet moving mechanically, as if he was on autopilot. He didn't even remember the steps it took to get there, his mind still tangled in a fog of confusion. When he finally reached his door, he stood there for a moment, staring at the familiar lock as if it held the key to all the answers he didn't have.

He stepped inside, the door closing softly behind him. The silence of the apartment was suffocating.

It was only then that he realized how alone he truly was.

XIII

THE DIARY



THE PAGES OF THE NOTEBOOK HAD BECOME A BLUR. Words that once felt like an escape now felt like a weight, each line, each verse reminding him of what had been lost. His hand moved across the page, the pen scratching out words, but none of it felt right. None of it felt like it used to. There was no rhythm, no flow, just a rush of raw emotions spilling onto the paper in a desperate attempt to make sense of the pain.

The poems had started out simple, almost playful, his first attempts at expressing what he felt, at capturing fleeting moments that were too big to hold in his mind. But now, as he flipped through the torn pages of the notebook, the words felt heavier. They were no longer just lines of poetry. They were fragments of his heart, broken and scattered. They weren't about her anymore. They were about him, about the emptiness that had taken root inside him, about the fear that nothing would ever feel whole again.

He could barely read the words now, the ink smudged from the tears that had come with each line. It wasn't just the pages that were torn; it was him, too. Each verse felt like a thread unraveling, something slowly pulling apart at the seams.

His eyes moved over the words, but they didn't make sense. There was no meaning in them, no comfort, only the aching reminder of the silence that had replaced everything he had once believed in. The joy, the warmth, the hope, all of it was gone, leaving behind only the mess of what had been left unsaid.

He ran his fingers over the pages, trying to find something, some shred of clarity in the chaos. But there was nothing. Nothing that made it better. Nothing that healed the wound she had left behind. He had filled page after page with his thoughts, his feelings, his longings, but it was never enough.

It was as though the more he wrote, the emptier he became. The words had stopped offering comfort. They no longer bridged the gap between him and her. They had only created a chasm, a space that no poem, no verse, could ever fill.

I don't know how to move on. The thought came to him as he stared at the notebook. It was a simple, blunt truth, but one he had been avoiding for so long. He didn't know how to let go of something that had been so real, so vibrant, and now felt like a faded dream.

The pen was still in his hand, but it felt heavier than it had before. He set it down, the quiet of the room settling over him. The only sound was the faint rustling of the pages as they fell into place, as though the notebook itself had given up on him, just as he had given up on finding the answers.

He stood up, looking around his room, but nothing looked the same. The space that had once felt like his own sanctuary now felt foreign. His eyes landed on the small plant by the window, the one he had given her so long ago. The one that had once been vibrant, full of life, just like their connection.

But now, the leaves were yellowing, wilting at the edges. It was a reflection of everything that had changed. A symbol of what had once been beautiful, now fading into nothing.

He walked over to it, his fingers brushing the delicate leaves. The plant had been a gift, a simple gesture, but in his mind, it had always

represented something more. A promise. A beginning. Something that had started small and grew into something more. But now, it was dying. Just like everything else.

He took the plant in his hands, the weight of it too much to bear. It wasn't just the plant that was withering. It was him. He had given so much of himself, so much of his heart, and now there was nothing left.

The notebook. The plant. His thoughts. His words. They were all fragments of something that could never be put back together.

He wanted to throw the notebook out the window. He wanted to tear up the pages, to erase everything he had written, to wipe away the pain. But he didn't. Instead, he sat down at his desk, the weight of the notebook in front of him. He stared at it for a long time, his fingers twitching with the urge to write again. But he didn't. He couldn't.

Instead, he just sat there, in the stillness of the room, surrounded by the pieces of his own broken heart, with nothing left to say.

XIV

THE FRIEND



THE KNOCK ON THE DOOR CAME AT AN UNEXPECTED MOMENT, just as he was sitting at his desk, staring at the pile of books he hadn't touched in days. The silence of the room was stifling, pressing in on him from all sides. He wasn't sure why he had kept the door locked. It wasn't like anyone was coming over. No one was going to check in on him, not anymore.

But then, there was that knock again. Hesitant, polite.

He stood up, his legs stiff from sitting too long. When he opened the door, there was Rahul, standing in the hallway with his hands in his pockets, a hesitant smile on his face. Rahul had always been the type to show up uninvited, never waiting for permission, but there was something different about the way he stood there now, like he knew something was wrong.

"Hey, man," Rahul said, his voice softer than usual. "I thought I'd check on you."

He stood there, frozen for a moment, unsure of what to say. Rahul was one of the few friends who hadn't disappeared after everything had fallen apart. The ones who knew him well enough to see through his excuses when he said he was fine. But even then, Rahul hadn't pushed. Until now.

“I’m okay,” he muttered, trying to sound convincing, but the words fell flat. It was the same thing he’d been saying to everyone, but it didn’t feel true anymore. Not in the slightest.

“Don’t give me that,” Rahul replied, stepping into the room without waiting for an invitation. “I know you. And you don’t seem fine.”

He didn’t argue, didn’t try to deflect. Rahul had known him too well for too long. They’d shared everything: the good, the bad, the ugly. There was no use pretending with him.

Rahul walked over to the desk, glancing at the piles of notes and the scattered notebook, but he didn’t comment on it. Instead, he took a seat in the chair across from him.

“So,” Rahul said, after a long silence. “What’s going on? I’ve been giving you space, but you can’t keep bottling this up. You look like shit, man.”

He chuckled weakly, his dry humor not reaching his eyes. “Yeah, thanks. I appreciate the honesty.”

“You think I’m gonna sugarcoat this for you?” Rahul said with a grin. “No chance. You need to talk. I’m here, whether you like it or not.”

He sighed, rubbing his face, feeling the weight of the past few weeks pressing in again. The conversations with her, the missed calls, the quiet distance that had grown between them. And now, the conversation from earlier that day, still hanging over him like a cloud he couldn’t shake.

“I don’t know what happened, Rahul. I really don’t.” His voice cracked, the emotion in his chest finally surfacing. “I thought everything was fine. I thought we had something. But now, it feels like I’ve lost her. And I don’t even know why.”

Rahul was silent for a long time, as if giving him the space to let it out. He was patient, waiting for the words to come.

“I keep thinking maybe it’s my fault,” he continued, his voice barely above a whisper. “Maybe I messed up somehow, and she doesn’t want me anymore. Maybe I wasn’t enough.” He laughed bitterly, the sound

hollow. "But she won't tell me. She won't explain. And I'm just... left here, trying to figure it out."

Rahul's expression softened. "It's not your fault. Relationships aren't always about what we can or can't do. Sometimes people grow apart. Sometimes things change, and we don't see it coming."

"But I thought we were different," he said, his voice rising, frustration building. "I thought we had something real, something that wasn't just going to fade away. And now, I feel like I'm just holding on to something that's already gone."

Rahul leaned forward, his tone more serious now. "Look, man. You're going through something tough. I get that. And I'm not gonna lie to you; it's gonna hurt. It already does. But you can't let yourself drown in it. She's made her choice. And you have to start making yours."

He looked at his friend, the weight of the words sinking in. "I don't even know where to start. How do I move on from this?"

Rahul stood up, walking over to the window and looking out at the world that felt so distant. "One step at a time. Don't try to figure it all out at once. And don't stay here, trapped in your head. Go for a walk. Get out. Clear your mind. You can't heal if you keep locking yourself in this room."

The words felt both comforting and impossible at the same time. The idea of stepping outside, of letting go of the weight of everything, felt so foreign to him. But he knew Rahul was right. He couldn't keep living in this suspended state, clinging to memories that only made the present feel worse.

Rahul turned back to him, a small smile playing at the corner of his mouth. "You've been through worse, man. You'll get through this, too. But you gotta start by taking care of yourself. Don't let this break you."

He nodded slowly, unsure of where to begin, but feeling, for the first time in weeks, like maybe it was possible to start somewhere.

"Thanks, Rahul," he said, his voice quieter now, but somehow stronger. "I needed this."

Rahul gave him a thumbs-up. “Anytime. I’m here. Just don’t keep it all bottled up. You can’t carry this alone.”

He watched his friend leave, the door closing softly behind him. The apartment felt different now, quieter, but not as suffocating. Rahul’s words echoed in his mind, giving him a flicker of hope that maybe, just maybe, he could start to piece things back together.

It wasn’t going to be easy. But for the first time in a long while, he felt like it was possible.

XV

REALIZATION



THE NIGHT AFTER RAHUL LEFT WAS THE FIRST TIME in what felt like weeks that he actually slept. It wasn't peaceful; there were dreams, fragments of faces, broken conversations, and moments of light and dark clashing in his mind. But it was sleep, and for the first time in a long time, he woke up feeling a small bit of relief.

He didn't rush to check his phone. He didn't dive into the messages that still lingered, unanswered, or the calls that hadn't come through. Instead, he let himself lie there for a while, staring at the ceiling, allowing himself to feel the silence without rushing to fill it. It was strange, but somehow it felt like the first step toward something, maybe healing, maybe understanding.

He got up, made himself a cup of tea, and sat by the window, watching the world wake up. The morning light was soft, and the sounds of the city outside were muffled, as though the world had slowed down just for him.

His eyes landed on the small potted plant by the window, the one that had once been a symbol of something fresh, something alive between him and her. The leaves were still yellowing, edges curling, but there was a new shoot sprouting from the base. It wasn't much, just a small,

fragile stem that hadn't yet bloomed, but it was there. And that small sign of life, despite everything, gave him a strange sense of comfort.

Maybe that's what it was, this process. Small shoots of new growth that emerged after everything else had withered. They didn't come all at once. They didn't come with a loud fanfare or a dramatic change. But they were there. And maybe that was enough.

He found himself thinking about the flower, the one he had given her, the one that now seemed to mirror his own emotional state. It had started off as a symbol of hope, something fresh and pure. But when it wilted, when the roots stopped growing, when the connection faded, he had lost sight of the possibility of anything new growing in its place.

But the plant was still there, still fighting, still reaching toward the light. And in that quiet moment, something shifted inside him. He realized that, like the plant, he wasn't finished. Not yet. It wasn't easy. It wasn't instant. But there was still room for growth, still room for something to bloom again.

The weight in his chest didn't lift immediately, and he knew it wouldn't. There was no magic cure for what he had been through. But that small shoot, that tiny bit of green, was a reminder that life wasn't about waiting for things to return to the way they were. It was about learning to grow from where you were, to take the broken pieces and build something new with them.

He picked up his notebook, the one that had been filled with fragmented lines and poems about her, about loss, about things he couldn't control. He flipped through the pages, each word like an old wound, but now, somehow, they didn't hurt as much. They were still there, but they no longer felt like the only truth he had.

He opened to a fresh page, picked up his pen, and started writing.

This is the moment. The one I have been waiting for. The moment when I finally stop looking back, stop searching for what's already gone.

The words flowed more easily than they had in weeks. For the first time, they didn't feel forced. He didn't feel like he was trying to capture

something lost; instead, he felt like he was simply acknowledging where he was now.

I will grow, just like the plant in the window. Slowly, in my own time. There is no rush. Only space to fill, room to breathe.

He paused, staring at the page. There was something about writing that felt grounding, something about the act of putting his thoughts into words that allowed him to release them. The weight that had been pressing down on him for so long, hopelessness, uncertainty, grief, was still there, but it no longer felt like the only thing he had. He was moving forward. It wasn't easy. It wasn't perfect. But he was moving.

He put the pen down and leaned back in his chair, staring out the window. The city was still waking up, the sounds of morning flowing through the air. But now, for the first time in a long while, he felt like he was awake too.

XVI

EMPTY ROOM



THE ROOM WAS QUIETER THAN USUAL. It had always been a place of solace for him, his sanctuary, the space where he could escape the world and lose himself in his thoughts. But now, the silence in the room was suffocating. The once comforting familiarity of the walls, the bookshelves, the desk, everything felt distant, empty.

The notebook sat on the desk in front of him, its worn pages filled with words he had long stopped reading. It was as if every thought, every emotion he had poured into it had lost its meaning. The pages that once held memories, love, and longing now felt like a weight, a reminder of something that had gone wrong.

He glanced around the room, his eyes landing on the small plant by the window. It had started to grow again, fragile and small, but it was there, alive, pushing toward the light. And for a moment, he wondered if that was the best metaphor for him, for everything that had happened. There was growth, yes, but it was slow, uncertain. And just like the plant, he wasn't sure what would come next.

His gaze moved to the bed, the empty space beside him. The absence was so palpable, it almost seemed to fill the room. He hadn't realized how much it had hurt, how much he had relied on her presence until it was gone. The bed had once been a place of shared dreams, whispered

secrets, and laughter, but now, it felt cold. He hadn't been able to sleep properly since everything fell apart. Each night was filled with restless thoughts, memories that didn't belong to him anymore.

He had spent so many days buried in his thoughts, so many nights replaying conversations and moments, that he hadn't noticed the room had changed around him. The clutter that had once seemed insignificant now felt overwhelming. The walls that had once felt like a cocoon now felt like they were closing in on him.

He stood up, his legs stiff from sitting too long, and walked over to the window. The city outside was alive with movement, the hum of traffic, the distant chatter of people, the sound of life continuing. It was strange to think that the world kept moving forward, while he was still stuck in the same place, caught in a moment that had passed him by.

He reached for the blinds and pulled them open, letting the sunlight filter into the room. It was a small thing, but the light seemed to fill the space, chasing away some of the darkness that had taken root in his mind. He wasn't sure if he was ready for it, or if he was even capable of embracing it, but the light felt like a sign, an invitation to step out of the shadows, to finally face the empty room, the emptiness inside.

He stared out the window for a long time, watching the world move around him, feeling detached, as if he were observing it from a distance. His mind kept drifting back to her. To the words she had said. To the things they had shared, and the things they hadn't. The silence between them had become a language of its own, and it had become too loud to ignore.

He couldn't fix it. He couldn't go back. The relationship, the love they had once shared, was gone. But that didn't mean he couldn't find a way forward. It didn't mean he was stuck here, in this empty room, this empty space, forever.

He knew that now. It was time to let go, even if it felt like he was still holding on. It was time to stop trying to force things that weren't meant to be, to stop looking for something that was no longer there.

The empty room was a reflection of the emptiness inside him, but it didn't have to stay that way. There was still room for something new, something he hadn't yet discovered. He didn't have all the answers, but for the first time in a long time, he felt like he could move forward.

He walked over to the desk, picked up his notebook, and closed it. He didn't need to read the pages anymore. He didn't need to keep looking back.

He turned toward the door, his hand resting on the knob, and for the first time in what felt like forever, he stepped outside, into the world that was still moving forward without him.

The room, the silence, the emptiness, they would remain behind. And he would carry on, one step at a time.

XVII

THE RIVER



THE WALK TO THE RIVER WASN'T PLANNED. He didn't need to go, and yet he found himself heading in that direction without even thinking about it. The city was a blur around him as he moved, each step taking him further away from the apartment, from the stillness that had become too much to bear. The world outside felt different today, quieter, as if it, too, had sensed the change within him.

When he reached the riverbank, the air was cooler than he had expected, a sharp breeze cutting through the warmth of the day. He stood there for a moment, looking out at the water, watching as it moved, endless and untouchable. It was always the same river, flowing steadily, never stopping, always moving forward. No matter how much he watched it, it never stopped for anything, never paused to take a breath.

He thought about that, how the river kept going, no matter what. No matter what had happened before, no matter what was coming. It simply moved, endlessly.

He found a quiet spot near the edge, just where the trees began to thin out, and sat down on a large rock that jutted out toward the water. The sound of the current was soothing, the steady rush of the water almost meditative. The same sound he had heard so many times before,

but today it felt different. Today, it was like the water was calling him to listen, to let go, to stop holding onto the past so tightly.

He closed his eyes, letting the cool breeze tug at his clothes. His thoughts drifted back to her, back to the way she had once been, the way they had been together. He remembered the laughter, the quiet moments they shared, the promise of something that felt so real, so right. He remembered the way her eyes had looked at him when she said, I'll always be around. It had meant everything to him then, and now, it felt like a broken promise, like something that had faded into nothing.

The weight of it all had settled in his chest, like a stone that he couldn't move. The confusion, the doubt, the hurt, all felt heavier than the world around him. But here, by the river, the weight didn't seem so crushing. Here, by the water, he realized something he hadn't been able to before: He had to let it go.

The current kept moving, relentlessly. The river didn't stop, didn't hesitate. It didn't hold onto anything. It simply moved.

And maybe that was what he needed to do, too.

He took a deep breath, feeling the cool air fill his lungs, and for the first time in a long while, he exhaled completely. The feeling of releasing, of letting the weight go, was almost strange. Like he had been holding his breath for too long, and now, it was time to finally let go.

He stood up slowly, his legs stiff from sitting too long. He approached the river's edge, looking at the water as it rushed past him. There was a small piece of driftwood caught between two rocks, and it bobbed gently in the current, moving with the flow of the river. It was small, insignificant, but it moved along with the water, never trying to fight the current, never trying to stop the inevitable.

He knelt down and picked up the piece of wood, feeling its rough surface in his hand. He could throw it into the river. He could let it go, just like he needed to let go of everything he had been holding onto: the memories, the hurt, the unanswered questions.

For a long moment, he just held it, looking at the water. The thought of releasing it into the current made him nervous, made him afraid of

losing something that had once meant so much. But deep down, he knew it was time. The river had been teaching him all along.

With a final deep breath, he tossed the piece of wood into the river, watching as it was carried away by the current. It disappeared quickly, swallowed by the endless flow of water, leaving nothing behind but ripples.

He stood there, watching the water for a while, feeling a strange sense of peace settle over him. The river was still flowing. It had carried the wood away, and it would carry away anything else that needed to go. And somehow, it made him feel like he, too, could keep moving, keep flowing.

When he turned to leave, the air seemed different. The world seemed lighter. He still didn't have all the answers, still didn't know exactly what came next, but something had shifted inside him. He wasn't stuck anymore. The past wasn't gone, but it didn't have to define him.

The river kept flowing. And he would, too.

XVIII

DREAM



THE NIGHT HAD FALLEN QUIETLY, the kind of evening where the world feels suspended in stillness. He lay in bed, his mind restless, but his body exhausted from the weight of the last few weeks. The cool air filtered through the window, carrying with it the scent of earth and late autumn. It was the kind of peace that should have been soothing, but instead, it only highlighted how far he felt from everything.

He closed his eyes, hoping for sleep to come and take him away from his thoughts, to escape the emptiness that had settled in his chest. But as the darkness deepened, he found himself drifting not into sleep, but into something else: something vivid, strange, and far too real.

She was there.

It wasn't the same as the last time he had seen her. This was different. In this dream, she was smiling at him, her eyes filled with warmth, and there was no distance between them. No space. No awkward silences. Just... her. The way she used to be. The way she used to look at him before everything had broken apart.

He reached out, but she was just out of arm's reach. He felt his hand trembling, the distance between them stretching like a thread that he

couldn't close. He wanted to say something, anything, but his voice felt frozen, caught in his throat.

She stepped closer, her presence filling the space, and he could feel the warmth of her, the softness of her gaze. She reached out for his hand, her fingers brushing against his, and for the first time in so long, he didn't feel the weight of the emptiness that had followed her departure. He felt whole again. Connected.

"I'm here," she whispered, her voice the same as it had always been, soft and familiar, the sound of it cutting through the silence. "I'm always here."

He wanted to hold onto that. To hold onto the moment. To pull her close, to say everything he had wanted to say. To fix everything that had been broken. But the words never came. And the moment, like all dreams, started to slip away, fading like smoke in his hands.

The dream shifted then, like a scene melting into another. The warmth of her hand faded from his fingers, replaced by the cold emptiness that had come to define his waking life. She was still there, but she was further away now, her figure dimming, her voice becoming a faint echo in the distance. She called his name, but it was too late. The connection was gone. He reached for her again, but his hand passed through her, as if she were no longer real, just a memory.

And then, just as quickly as it had all started, the dream shattered. He woke up with a gasp, his body drenched in cold sweat, his heart pounding in his chest. The room was still, and the sounds of the night seemed too loud now, too sharp. He lay there in the dark, trying to catch his breath, the remnants of the dream still clinging to him, too real to shake off.

For a long time, he didn't move. His mind raced with the fragments of the dream, the way it had felt to be with her again, the way her touch had felt like something solid, something he could hold onto. He closed his eyes again, but the warmth of the dream, the comfort, was already fading, slipping through his fingers like sand.

The ache in his chest returned, stronger now. He had known it wasn't real. He had known she couldn't come back, that everything he had lost was gone. But in that moment, in the dream, it had felt like she was still there, still a part of him. Still his.

He sat up slowly, his body trembling from the intensity of the dream. The silence of the room felt louder now, as if the world had shifted around him, leaving him in a space that was both familiar and foreign. He could still feel the ghost of her presence, as if she were just beyond reach, waiting for him to find her again.

But she wasn't there.

He stood up, his legs unsteady as he walked to the window. The city below was bathed in the soft glow of streetlights, the distant hum of life continuing as it always did. It all seemed so far away, and yet, in the quiet of his room, everything felt close. Too close.

The dream had been a reminder, a cruel one, but a reminder nonetheless. He had let go, he had tried to move on, but the past still lingered, hanging on like a shadow. And he knew, deep down, that it always would.

But it didn't have to control him. Not anymore.

He turned away from the window and looked around the room, at the things that had once felt like everything. The books, the chair, the desk, all of it had once been his world. And it was still here. He was still here.

It wasn't over. It couldn't be.

He walked over to his desk and picked up his notebook again, staring at the blank pages. The dream hadn't fixed anything. It hadn't given him answers. But it had reminded him of what he still had.

It was time to start writing again. Not to hold onto the past, but to move forward. To make sense of the present.

He opened the notebook, picked up the pen, and began to write.

XIX

REFLECTION



THE MORNING LIGHT WAS DIFFERENT NOW. The way it filtered through the curtains, casting long shadows across the floor, felt less oppressive. It wasn't that the pain had disappeared overnight, but something had changed. Maybe it was the dream, or maybe it was the quiet realization that he couldn't keep letting the past dictate who he was or who he could be. He had been living in that space, the space between what was lost and what might still be, for too long.

He hadn't written much since that night by the river, but today felt different. Today, the words seemed easier to find, as if he was finally ready to say what needed to be said. He sat at his desk, notebook open, pen in hand, and began to write.

I've spent so much time trying to fix something that's already broken.

He paused, staring at the words. They felt true. So true that it almost scared him. He had been holding onto something that didn't belong to him anymore, something that was already gone. It had taken him so long to realize that. He had spent weeks, months, in a state of suspended grief, clinging to memories that no longer had a place in his life.

But now, he could see it more clearly. What he had with her, that connection, that bond, it was no longer his to hold. He couldn't keep

chasing something that was already lost. And in that moment, he knew he had to stop.

It's not about forgetting. It's about learning how to move forward.

The words flowed more easily now. He wrote about the silence, the distance, and the way the loss had felt like a slow, suffocating thing. But he also wrote about the future. About what it meant to finally accept what had happened and start building something new, even if it was small, even if it was just for himself.

The words weren't perfect. They didn't give him all the answers. But they felt like a release, like he was shedding something heavy, something that had been holding him back.

He wrote for hours, each word a small step away from the past, each line a small act of letting go. By the time the sun was high in the sky, the notebook was filled with thoughts he hadn't known he had. Some of it was raw, some of it was painful, but all of it was real.

He put the pen down and leaned back in his chair, taking a deep breath. It wasn't much. It wasn't everything. But it was a start.

He glanced at the plant on the windowsill. It had grown a little more in the past few days. A small sign of life, small but steady, reaching toward the light. And for the first time in a long time, he realized that maybe, just maybe, that was how things worked. Life didn't always bloom in grand gestures. It didn't always come with clarity or certainty. Sometimes, it came in small moments. Small steps.

And that was enough.

XX

THE ACT



THE MORNING AFTER HE HAD FILLED THE PAGES OF HIS NOTEBOOK, something inside him had shifted. There was a sense of clarity now, a quiet certainty that hadn't been there before. It was as if he had finally taken a breath after holding it for too long. The world outside his window, the sounds of life continuing, no longer felt so distant. It wasn't that everything was fixed or that the emptiness was gone, but there was a new understanding. The heaviness had lifted, even if just a little.

He sat at his desk, staring at the notebook in front of him. The pages were full now, full of emotions he had buried for too long. The pain, the longing, the questions, everything had found its place on those pages. But now, the question lingered: What next?

The question hadn't come until now. He hadn't been ready to ask it before. But the words he had written, the emotions he had laid bare on the paper, he couldn't keep carrying them. He couldn't keep holding onto what had been, even if it felt like a part of him still wanted to. The act of writing had been a release, but it wasn't enough. He had to do something more.

There was a part of him that wanted to keep everything: keep the memories, keep the pain, keep everything that was attached to her. But

another part of him knew that to truly heal, he had to let go completely. It wasn't about erasing the past. It wasn't about forgetting. But it was about stopping the cycle of holding onto what could never come back.

He stood up and walked over to the small box tucked away in the corner of his room. It had always been there, a forgotten container of old memories. Letters, photographs, and mementos that had once meant everything to him. It was time to face it.

He opened the box, his fingers brushing against the familiar objects. The pictures of them together. The ticket stubs from the concert they'd attended. The notes she had left for him, little scribbled reminders of moments that felt so real. He picked up one of the photos, looking at it for a long moment. She was smiling, her eyes shining with something he hadn't been able to name until now, hope, maybe. A version of her that was so full of life, so full of possibilities.

His chest tightened. He wanted to keep it. He wanted to hold onto it because letting go felt like losing a part of himself. But he knew what he had to do. He knew that holding onto the past was only keeping him stuck in a place that no longer existed. The future he had imagined with her was gone. The future he had now was still uncertain, but it was his. It had to be.

He carefully placed the photo back into the box and picked up the other items, each one a symbol of a different time. With each item, a wave of emotion washed over him, the good, the bad, the everything in between. He closed his eyes, trying to gather the strength to do what he knew he had to do.

It wasn't easy. It wasn't quick. But he had to make a choice. He picked up the box and carried it outside, stepping into the cool morning air. The city around him was waking up, people moving about, unaware of the small act he was about to perform. The light felt different now, softer, less oppressive.

He walked to the river.

The same river that had carried away the driftwood. The same river that had reminded him that sometimes, you had to let go of what was

no longer yours. He knelt by the water's edge and opened the box one last time. He carefully took each item out, each photo, each letter, each token, and let them slip from his hands, one by one, into the current.

The first photo. The ticket stubs. The notes. All of it, carried away by the river, disappearing into the flow, leaving nothing but ripples behind. With each piece, something inside him loosened. The weight that had been pressing on him seemed to fade just a little more.

He stood there for a long time, watching the water, waiting for the last piece to disappear into the distance. The current carried it all away, just like everything else that had come and gone. And for the first time, he felt like he wasn't losing anything anymore. He was simply moving on. The past wasn't his to hold onto anymore.

The box was empty now. The mementos of a life he had once imagined were gone. And in that emptiness, there was space. Space to breathe, space to grow, space to move forward.

He walked back home, the air feeling lighter, the weight that had been hanging over him now just a distant memory. He didn't know what came next. He didn't know what the future held. But he knew that he had taken a step. A real one. A step toward letting go and finding his way back to himself.

XXI

THE HORIZON



THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED FELT DIFFERENT, not in some dramatic, life-altering way, but in the kind of subtle shift that you only notice when you look back. The weight that had once felt suffocating was now lighter, not gone, but manageable. He had taken the first step, and with it, a small sense of freedom had begun to take root.

The mornings no longer felt like a battle to get through. He woke up earlier now, without the heaviness that had once made the bed feel like a prison. The world outside his window seemed different, brighter somehow, more inviting. He still had bad days, moments when the old pain crept back in, but they didn't last. They were just moments, fleeting and sharp, and he had learned how to breathe through them.

Today was one of those days.

He found himself standing at the edge of the hilltop, looking out at the view below. It wasn't much, just a stretch of trees and fields, a few scattered buildings in the distance. But from up here, it all looked peaceful, untouched. The kind of quiet beauty that made you forget about everything else, if only for a moment.

He had come here before, when everything had been different, when he had felt sure about where he was going and what he wanted. But

today, standing here, there was no certainty. No plan. Just the vastness of the horizon in front of him, stretching as far as the eye could see.

He took a deep breath, letting the cool air fill his lungs. The sun was low in the sky, casting a warm glow across the land. He closed his eyes for a moment, letting himself absorb the stillness, the quiet hum of the world. For the first time in a long time, he didn't feel the need to rush. He didn't feel the pressure of what was coming next.

He didn't have the answers yet. He didn't know what the future would look like, but he didn't need to. He had spent so long trying to figure it out, trying to force something that wasn't there. Today, he realized, he didn't need to have it all figured out. The horizon wasn't something to reach, but something to be with. Something to witness, without the need to control it.

He opened his eyes and looked out again. The light from the setting sun painted everything in shades of gold and pink, a reminder that even in the quiet, there was beauty to be found. The journey ahead wasn't clear, but it was his. It was his to take, step by uncertain step.

He pulled his phone out of his pocket and glanced at it. There were messages waiting for him, some from friends, some from acquaintances, but he didn't feel the need to dive into them. They could wait. For now, the world outside was enough. He slipped the phone back into his pocket and turned toward the path leading down the hill.

He took his first step.

And then another.

The world was still vast, and the future still uncertain. But for the first time, he didn't mind. He didn't need to chase the horizon anymore. He just needed to keep walking, to keep moving forward, at his own pace.

And that, he realized, was enough.

XXII

CLOSING PAGE



THE EVENING AIR WAS COOL AS HE SAT AT HIS DESK, the familiar notebook open in front of him. The room, which had once felt so heavy, now felt lighter, calmer. The noise in his mind, the chaos of memories and regrets, had quieted, leaving behind something unexpected: peace.

He ran his fingers over the edge of the pages, the ones he had filled with his thoughts, his grief, his confusion. Each line was a step he had taken, a moment of release, of letting go. The words had been his way of working through the noise, of capturing the scattered pieces of his heart.

But now, there was nothing left to say.

He had written for weeks, months, pouring everything onto paper, trying to make sense of what had happened, trying to fill the silence with something that could give him closure. But closure didn't come in the form of words. It didn't come from a final sentence or a neatly tied-up ending. It came from within, from the acceptance of the journey, from understanding that some things were simply beyond his control.

He picked up his pen and hovered over the page for a moment, not sure what to write. There was no grand revelation left to make. No grand finale to put down.

This is the end.

It wasn't final in the way he had once imagined, no dramatic, tear-filled closure. No neatly packaged resolution. Just a quiet acknowledgment that it was time to stop searching for answers, that it was okay to leave things unfinished, to let go of the parts of his past that no longer served him.

The notebook had served its purpose. The words had given him the space he needed to heal, to grow, and now he could move forward. The past would remain in the pages, in the words he had written, but it no longer had a hold on him.

He wrote the final lines slowly, carefully, the ink flowing as he chose each word with a sense of finality that felt freeing.

I no longer write for you, or for anyone. I write for myself. This is my story now, and I will carry it forward. The past is part of me, but it is not all of me.

He put the pen down and closed the notebook with a soft click. It wasn't a grand ending. It wasn't a loud, emotional finale. But it was enough. It was all he needed.

He stood up and walked to the window, looking out at the sky as the last remnants of sunlight faded into twilight. The world outside was still the same, full of noise, of life, of endless movement. But he had found his own quiet place within it, a place where he no longer had to search for answers, where he could simply be.

The first blossoms of spring were beginning to bloom on the trees, their delicate petals slowly unfurling, a sign of new beginnings. The world was still turning, the days still passing, but he was no longer bound by what had been. He had taken the first steps toward a new chapter, and it felt like freedom.

As he looked out over the horizon, something inside him shifted again, gently, quietly. He had let go of the past. He had finally come to terms with what had happened, and now, he was free to move forward. Not because he had all the answers, but because he had found peace in not needing to.

With a final glance at the notebook on the desk, he stepped away from the window and walked toward the door. There was no more looking back. There was only the future, waiting for him to take the next step. And for the first time in a long time, he felt ready.

The Time Has Passed

Time has passed, perhaps we'll meet again,
But you're no longer as you were, and I have changed as well.
I call out, yet you remain silent,
Tired of waiting, what remains inside your heart?

The breeze whispers softly, through the pines it sweeps,
You forget in two days how fickle your heart keeps.
I sense your love, yet it speaks through no sound,
I search for words, but only silence surrounds.

Tears stain my life, and defeat lingers on,
I've grown accustomed to this habit, as memories drag me along.
Your eyes once drowned me, your love once consumed,
I wrote for you, but you left me in the gloom.

Your habits no longer matter, not as they once did,
Two days shared, was it love or just a bid?
I sought the right words, I sought you alone,
But now, I've stopped searching, my heart has grown.

I read what I've written, did you cast it aside?
Maybe my words are fading, but you're no longer my guide.
I watch the sun rise, the clouds drifting slow,
Did you remember me, in the shadow of your glow?

This life is strange, with rain that falls so light,
It's you who shaped this habit I now fight.
I wrote for you, carefully choosing each phrase,
But now I laugh through my pain, as memories haze.

The knot of love has broken, the bond we once held,
You laugh with another, while in sorrow, I dwell.
I search for you, but you're lost to me now,
I can't live without you, but still, I wonder how.

If I die, I will never meet you again,
You won't remember me, or hold me within.
Spring will return, but you won't come back,
You've left me, and our promises lie in the cracks.

You were the flower that bloomed with grace,
Now I've been forced to forget, and you've left no trace.
The flower is gone, its petals now dry,
The pain still lingers, unanswered, a sigh.

I dreamt of us, of all we shared,
But you're gone, no matter how much I cared.
Sweet words and laughter, once so true,
Your love, now a shadow, lost in the blue.

Beyond the horizon, past mountains and seas,
It was you, and I wrote it all, caught in the breeze.
Do you remember me, or have I slipped away?
The memories we made, did you burn them today?

You were a player, you lost me in the game,
But I'll keep feeling, calling your name.
It's my heart, still wild and free,
Those three words still haunt me. Should I laugh or cry?

Don't leave me, darling, don't break the vow,
The promises we made are still here somehow.
My body is weary, my heart full of pain,

Unspoken Goodbye

A smile, so false, what's left to gain?

Is this love worth suffocating for?
Dancing to another's tune forevermore?

Unspoken Goodbye

A story of love remembered and love let go. Through fragments of poems, memories, and silence, Unspoken Goodbye follows a young man wrestling with heartbreak, the weight of what was left unsaid, and the slow, uncertain work of healing. Each page of his notebook carries both loss and the possibility of renewal. This is a journey about learning that closure doesn't come from answers, but from acceptance, and that even in bokenness, something new can bloom .

“

Time passes, doesn't it? Maybe we'll meet again...



NIKESH LAGUN

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